

**MCA
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Museum of Contemporary Art Denver Cuts Operating Budget, Downsizes Staff

DENVER - March 17, 2009 – To ensure its financial stability during the current economic climate, the MCA DENVER Board of Trustees has cut the Museum's 2009 fiscal budget by 17 percent, resulting in the difficult decision to eliminate five staff positions, including the position of Deputy Director.

MCA DENVER staff was informed in February that the museum could be facing layoffs, as the budget shifts from \$2.5 million in 2008 to \$2.1 million in 2009.

"Our management team and executive staff started this conversation in November 2008 when economic realities became clear and we as an organization felt that we needed to take prudent and responsible steps to ensure that our operating expenses in 2009 reflected these new economic realities," said MCA DENVER Finance Committee Chair Mark Bush. "We'll continue to monitor our revenue streams and our expenses to ensure the Museum remains in solid financial health."

The MCA DENVER board has been in discussions with deputy director John Grant regarding the restructuring of his position since final completion of the building. Grant and the board agreed that he would remain on staff through the hiring of a new director to ensure continuity of leadership in the institution. Grant will step down at the end of March, but will be available on a contract basis for special and curatorial projects.

While the board has adopted a budget for 2009, it has been its policy that the budget would be revised upon the arrival of a new director. One of the first duties of newly-appointed MCA DENVER director Adam Lerner will be to work with the board on a final budget and organizational review. After an exhaustive six month nationwide search, Lerner was selected for his curatorial expertise and his unique ability to advance MCA DENVER's vision to engage broader audiences in exploring art and ideas.

MCA DENVER is one of several museums across the country to recently cut budgets and reduce staff, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Denver Art Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, the Cincinnati Art Museum and the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The operating reductions will not directly impact museum programming or its mission; however the public may see changes at MCA DENVER as new director Lerner, the staff and board continue their strategic planning process this year and beyond.

Employees impacted by the MCA DENVER layoffs will receive a severance package. In addition, a transition timeline for each position is in progress.

About MCA DENVER

Following the European tradition of the Kunsthalle, MCA DENVER is a non-collecting institution acting as an incubator for art and ideas, artistic exchange and dialogue. As Denver's first institution devoted entirely to contemporary art, MCA DENVER inaugurated its new environmentally sustainable facility, designed by David Adjaye, on October 28, 2007. The 27,000 square foot space, located in the Lower Downtown area, has received the distinction of Gold level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). MCA DENVER marks David Adjaye's first public building in the United States as well as his first contemporary art museum worldwide.

Continuing investment in exhibitions of artworks by local, national and international artists, MCA DENVER has five distinct galleries, three spaces for education, multiple sites for special projects/commissioned works and one live art and lecture hall as potential sites for work in all media. For more information call 303-298-7554 or visit www.mcadenver.org.

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